

Amendments to the Abstract:

Please replace the Abstract with the following amended Abstract:

-- A method of preparing a nonwoven web that has substantially continuous synthetic fine fiber includes preparing an aqueous amide crosslinked polymer solution. The solution is extruded through a die having a plurality of orifices to form a plurality of threadlines. The threadlines are then attenuated with a primary gaseous source under conditions sufficient to permit the viscosity of each threadline to increase incrementally with increasing distance from the die, at a rate sufficient to provide fibers having a desired attenuation and mean fiber diameter without significant fiber breakage. --